



## OTHER HIGHWAY USERS

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Drivers are not the only people using the highways. They share the highways with pedestrians, bicyclists, and even animals. Other people have certain rights and privileges on the highways of which automobile drivers must be aware and must respect.

A two-ton automobile can be a dangerous weapon. Use common sense and courtesy, particularly in dealing with other highway users.

### Sharing The Road With Pedestrians

You too will be a pedestrian on occasion. So learn and obey the common-sense rules when the roles are reversed.

**Crossing on Signal** — Pedestrians may cross a road, being sure to stay within the crosswalk, on a green signal. They may not cross if facing a “wait” or “don’t walk” signal, nor may they cross on the red or yellow signal or the red-green combined or dark period following a green signal unless facing a “walk” signal. On a green arrow, whether alone or accompanied by a steady red or yellow, the pedestrian may enter the road only if he can do so safely and without interfering with vehicle traffic.

**Intersections Without Signal** — When there are no traffic signals or if they are not operating, drivers must yield the right-of-way, slowing or stopping if necessary, for a pedestrian crossing within a crosswalk.

**Crossing Between Intersections** — A pedestrian crossing the road between intersections, except at marked crosswalk, must yield the right-of-way to all vehicles on the road.

**Walking on the Road** — It is unlawful for pedestrians to walk in the road where there are sidewalks. Where there are no sidewalks, a pedestrian must walk on the left side of the road or its shoulder facing the traffic, and move as far to the left as possible when a vehicle approaches. Two or more pedestrians should walk in single file and never side by side of each other.

**Light Clothes** — For safety’s sake, pedestrians should wear light-colored clothing at night, enabling drivers to see them better.

### The Blind Pedestrian With White Cane Or Seeing-Eye Dog

Whenever a totally or partially blind pedestrian is crossing or attempting to cross a public street or highway guided by a guide dog or carrying in a raised or extended position a cane or walking stick which is metallic or white in color or white tipped with red, the driver of every vehicle approaching shall take such precautions as may be necessary to avoid injuring or endangering the pedestrian.

### Sharing The Road With Bicycles And Motorcycles

Many drivers have trouble adjusting to bicycles and

motorcycles operating on our streets and highways. Cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities on public roadways as other drivers.

### Lane Positions

Both bicycles and motorcycles are required to travel on the right hand side of the road with other traffic. Bicycles are not allowed to travel facing traffic, since this is far less safe. They must ride as near to the right hand side of the road as practical, while avoiding road hazards that could cause them to swerve into traffic.

To avoid gravel, debris, sewer grates and the like, experienced cyclists tend to pick a line on the road that is far enough on the right to avoid obstructing traffic, while not being so close to the shoulder or curb that they would have to swerve suddenly to avoid a hazard. Cyclists who are not on the extreme right hand side of the lane are not being careless, but are in fact attempting to account for traffic conditions.

Similarly, when cyclists are traveling past parked cars, they tend to move away from the cars, toward the center of the lane. This is to avoid injuring, or being injured by, persons getting out of those cars. In such cases, the cyclist is operating the bicycle properly. If possible, give the cyclist the entire lane. When road conditions prevent this, pass the cyclist with caution.

Motorcycles need a full lane width like other vehicles. A skilled motorcyclist is constantly changing positions within a lane to increase his ability to see and be seen, and to avoid objects on the road. Never move into the same lane with a motorcycle, even if the lane is wide and the cyclist is riding to one side. It is not only illegal, it is extremely hazardous.

### Special Conditions

Special conditions and situations may cause problems for cyclists, which drivers need to anticipate. Drivers should be aware of these problems, so they can help share the road safely with cyclists. Here are a few examples:

- The speed and distance of cyclists are not easily identified in traffic. Even when drivers see them, many say it’s difficult to judge how far away cyclists are or how fast they are traveling.
- This may be more of a problem for judging the speed of bicyclists. People know that motorcycles can keep up with automobiles, but the speeds of bicyclists may vary greatly. With today’s improved equipment, some bicyclists may be travelling 25 or 30 miles per hour, if not faster. Others will be travelling at much slower speeds. No cyclist’s speed can be taken for granted.
- Cyclists riding at night create visibility problems. Cyclists are required to have proper illumination to ride at night, but motorists should be aware that cyclists are not easily seen.

- Children riding bicycles create special problems for motorists. Children are not capable of proper judgment in determining traffic conditions, therefore motorists should be alert to the possibility of erratic movement and sudden changes in direction when children on bicycles are present.
- Drivers turning left in front of oncoming cyclists cause a large percentage of car/cycle accidents. Drivers often fail to pick the cyclist out of the traffic scene, or inaccurately judge the speed of the oncoming cycle. Overtaking, then making a right turn in front of the cyclist is also a cause of many accidents. **LOOK ONCE, THEN AGAIN. MAKE SURE YOU SEE THE CYCLE AND KNOW ITS SPEED BEFORE YOU TURN.**
- Cyclists maintain eye contact with the drivers of the automobiles around them, particularly when the cyclist or the automobile is making a turn. So too, before turning, a driver should attempt to gain and maintain eye contact with the cyclist.
- Bad weather and slippery surfaces cause greater problems for cyclists than for cars. These conditions create stability problems for all vehicles. Allow more following distance for cyclists when the road surface is wet and slippery. Also be alert to the problem of glare that rain and wet surfaces create, especially at night.
- Strong cross winds can move a cycle out of its lane of travel. Areas where this can happen are wide open, long stretches of highways and bridges. Large, fast-moving trucks sometimes create wind blasts which, under certain conditions, can move the cyclist out of his or her path of travel.
- Railroad grade crossings are a particular hazard to cyclists, and will usually cause them to slow down and possibly zigzag to cross the tracks head on.
- Metal or grated bridges cause a cycle to wobble much more than a car. An experienced cyclist slows down and moves to the center of the lane to allow room for handling the uneven surface. An inexperienced cyclist may become startled and try to quickly change direction. Be prepared for either reaction.
- Being aware of these situations and consciously looking for cyclists can help you share the road safely.

To learn more specifically how to ride a bicycle safely, contact:

The League of American Bicyclists  
1612 K Street NW, Suite 401  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
202-822-1333  
[www.bikeleague.org](http://www.bikeleague.org)

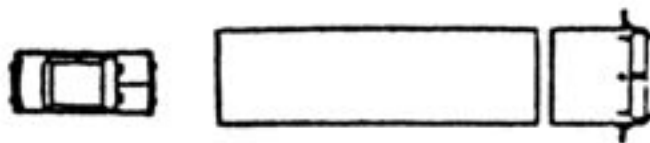
To learn about motorcycle safety, pick up a Tennessee Motorcycle Operator Manual at any Driver License Station. Good information is also available at [www.state.tn.us/mrep](http://www.state.tn.us/mrep)

## Sharing The Road With Trucks And Buses

You may be surprised to know that in 1998, 68% of all fatal accidents involving a commercial vehicle were caused by the passenger vehicle.

Too often drivers simply do not take into account that the larger the vehicle, the longer it takes for the vehicle to stop or slow down. This means that larger vehicles need larger "safety cushions" around them.

When passing a large commercial motor vehicle, *never*



*An example of a car in a truck's blind spot.*

pull in front of it and then slow down. If you are already in the flow of traffic and see a truck or bus about to merge, remember that they may need extra time and space to do so. Slow down if you can, or move to a different lane.

Every vehicle has blind spots and in general, the larger the vehicle, the larger the blind spot. If you are following a truck, make sure your vehicle is positioned so that the driver can see it in the side mirrors. A car following too closely does not have a clear view of the road ahead and may not be able to stop quickly enough to avoid rear-ending a truck.

Finally, for almost every motorist, backing is the most difficult task. If you see a truck or bus driver attempting to back up, stop and allow the vehicle to complete the maneuver safely before proceeding.

## Remember, Trucks Don't Drive Like Cars

Seems obvious, doesn't it? But the fact is that while most people realize that it's more difficult to drive a truck than a car, many don't know exactly what a truck's limitations are in terms of maneuverability, stopping distances, and blindspots. So here's a handy rule of thumb.

Generally speaking, the bigger they are:

- The bigger their blindspots.
- The more room they need to maneuver.
- The longer it takes them to stop.
- The longer it takes to pass them.
- The more likely you're going to be the loser in a collision.